(c) if so, whether no pre-shipment tests of the wheat were conducted; and

(d) if so, the action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) A quantity of 16.75 lakh MT has so far been contracted for import from Australia (13.25 lakh MT); Canada (2.5 lakh MT) and Argentina (1 lakh MT).

(b) The shipment of wheat from Canada would begin only from the month of March, 1997 onwards and, as such, the question of import consignments from Canada failing the test as per provisions of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act does not arise.

(c) and (d) As per contract terms with the foreign suppliers, the wheat to be shipped has to undergo pre-shipment quality inspection by the Government agencies in Canada and Australia, and by internationally reputed surveyors in the case of Argentina.

Export of Wheat to Afghanistan and Maldives

925. SHRI O.P. KOHLI:
SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ordered export of wheat to Afghanistan and Maldives;

(b) if so, whether the Ministry of Food have given their concurrence to this export;

(c) whether Government have imported 1.25 million tonnes of wheat from Canada in January, 1997;

(d) the reasons why these exports were ordered, when the country is importing wheat at double the price prevailing in the country; and

(e) the reasons why export of wheat to Nepal was not allowed?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) After considering different aspects the Government has allowed exports of 30,000 MT of wheat to Afghanistan and 2,500 MT of wheat flour to Maldives.

(c) Government has decided to import upto 2 million tonnes of wheat during 1996-97. A quantity of 16.25 lakh tonnes has already been contracted for import, as on 14.2.97. The quantity of wheat contracted for import from Canada is 2.50 lakh MTs.

(d) The export of 30,000 MTs of wheat to Afghanistan was allowed for humanitarian purpose on the request of the International Red Cross. The export of 2,500 MTs of wheat flour to Maldives was allowed in view of the small quantity involved as a special case. The average landed cost of imported wheat at Indian ports is Rs. 6227 per tonne and thus not double of the price prevailing in the country.

(e) A request from Government of Nepal for making 25,000 MTs of wheat available at PDS price was received. Government has not taken a decision on this request so far.

Normative cost of Sugar Factories

926. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether the normative cost of sugar factories have increased after 1993; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The Government have not prescribed any normative cost of sugar factories though the financial institutions while assessing the projects have been going by a certain standard taking into account the financing pattern and the prospect of return on capital. The financial institutions are generally concerned with the debt-equity ratio and the financial viability of the project. Since the State Governments contribute a large part of equity of the cooperatives and also have to guarantee the loans, the question of availability of total finance for a particular unit

has to be resolved between them, the cooperative and the financial institutions.

Increase in price of PDS levy sugar to meet operational cost of FCI

927. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has not for the past three to four years reimbursed the increased operational costs of the FCI in the distribution of levy sugar amounting to Rs. 400 crore;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay;

(c) whether the recent increase of PDS levy sugar from Rs. 9.05 per Kg. to Rs. 10.50 per Kg. was made to meet operational cost of the FCI; and

(d) if so, whether Government feel justified in increasing the price of levy sugar?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Amounts have been released to the FCI as and when demanded by them.

(c) and (d) The retail issue price of levy sugar supplied through Public Distribution System (PDS) has been revised from 9.05 per Kg. to Rs. 10.50 per Kg. w.e.f. 10.2.97. This upward revision had become overdue on account of the fact that the last revision had taken place in February, 94 and thereafter, the Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) of sugarcane had been revised upwards during the 3 successive sugar seasons.

वर्ष 1996-97 के दौरान आयात किए गए गेहूं की मात्रा

928. **प्रो. विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा:** क्या खाद्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) वर्ष 1996-97 के दौरान भारत द्वारा कितने गेहूं का आयात किया गया है;

(ख) यह गेहूं किस मूल्य पर खरीदा गया है;

(ग) भारत में इस गेहूं की पहुंच लागत कितनी है; और

(घ) इस वर्ष गेहूं का खरीद मूल्य कितना था?

खाद्य मंत्री तथा नागरिक आपूर्ति, उपभोक्ता मामले और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री (श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव): (क) सरकार ने गेहूं की घरेलू उपलब्धता में वृद्धि करने के लिए 2 मिलियन टन तक गेहूं आयात करने का निर्णय लिया है।

(ख) 14.2.1997 को स्थिति के अनुसार पहले से ही आयात के लिए ठेका की गई मात्रा और किए गए ठेके की दर नीचे दी गई है:-

देश	मात्रा (लाख टन)	दर अमरीकी डालर प्रति टन
आस्ट्रेलिया	10.00	148.00 जहाज तक निष्प्रभार
आस्ट्रेलिया	0.25	156.00 जहाज तक निष्प्रभार
कनाडा	2.50	152.50 जहाज तक निष्प्रभार
अर्जेन्टीना	1.00	173.00 जहाज तक निष्प्रभार

(ग) भारतीय पत्तनों पर गेहूं की औसत "सी. एंड एफ." लागत लगभग 6227 रुपये प्रति टन बैठती है।

(घ) 1996-97 के दौरान वसूली मूल्य 380 रुपए प्रति क्विंटल है। आगामी रखी विपणन मौसम 1997-98 के लिए वसूली मूल्य 415 रुपये प्रति क्विंटल निर्धारित किया गया है।

Import of Wheat From Canada

929. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government imported 1.25 million tonnes of wheat from Canada in the month of January, 1997;

(b) if so, whether any pre-shipment inspection was carried out before import and the quality of the wheat was found to be of standard;

(c) whether the clearance of the Cabinet and the Planning Commission was obtained before import of the wheat; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) to (d) Government after considering relevant factors have decided to import upto 2 million tonnes of wheat during